



California Regional Water Quality Control Board

San Francisco Bay Region



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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE WETLAND AND RIPARIAN PROJECT FORM and HABITAT MAPS AS A CONDITION FOR 401 WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

November 1, 2008

Obtaining the form: The *Wetland and Riparian Project Form and Habitat Maps* (Form) can be downloaded from <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/certs.shtml> or obtained by calling 510-622-2300 and requesting one.

Submitting the form: Please email the completed form, map files, and associated attachments to wetlandtracker@waterboards.ca.gov. If the form cannot be sent electronically, send two (2) hard copies, one to the address on this letterhead and the other to: San Francisco Estuary Institute, 7700 Pardee Lane, Oakland CA 94621-1424; both to the attention of "Wetland Tracker".

Introduction

This document describes information to be submitted to the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) for projects that include compensatory mitigation or restoration for dredging, filling, or otherwise impacting waters of the United States and/or waters of the State. The Water Board uses the following definitions to describe projects that should be put into Wetland Tracker system¹:

(1) a compensatory mitigation project is one that must replace lost wetland functions and/or acreage resulting from unavoidable impacts to wetlands, after avoidance and minimization have been carried out to the maximum extent practicable. Compensatory mitigation can be done by creating or restoring new wetlands and, occasionally, enhancing or preserving existing wetlands.

(2) a non-mitigation restoration project is one for which the primary purpose is to restore lost wetland or riparian functions, but which may adversely impact beneficial uses or functions temporarily before resulting in a net overall wetland gain.

¹ The Wetland Tracker system is managed by San Francisco Estuary Institute and can be viewed at www.wetlandtracker.org

Projects with only temporary vegetative impacts in which plants will grow back within 6 to 12 months are not required to fill out this form, unless the Water Board staff deems it important for certain projects. These will be determined on a case by case basis.

The Wetland Tracker is a pilot project to determine if project applicants can reliably provide information which is vital to track the overall net gain of wetland acreage and functions in the San Francisco Bay Region. Please send comments to Andree Breaux Greenberg at (agreenberg@waterboards.ca.gov) at the Water Board or Joshua Collins (josh@sfei.org) or Michael May (mikem@sfei.org) at San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI). A list of staff at SFEI and the Water Board who can assist with completing the data form can be found at the end of this document.

General Form Instructions

The Form should be filled out *after* the Applicant has received a 401 Water Quality Certification or Water Board Order. This Form does not substitute for the 401 permit application form which should be filled out when the Applicant *initially applies* for a permit. The following instructions are intended to help the Applicant provide information on his/her project that will assist with tracking overall regional wetland gains and losses, site location information, and mitigation or restoration requirements such as performance criteria.

Answer each question on the Form completely. If there is insufficient room for a complete response, please provide an attachment and identify the answer via the corresponding item number.

Notes on compensatory mitigation projects

In the wording of these instructions and on the Form, the development/impacting activity and its associated mitigation activity are each treated as separate "sites", even though they may both be occurring simultaneously on the same parcel of land. Unless otherwise indicated, information requested pertains to the mitigation project where wetlands will be created or restored, not to the development/impacting project where wetlands will be adversely affected (e.g. filled).

Compensatory mitigation is most effective at maintaining beneficial uses of waters of the State and achieving conformance with No Net Loss policies, first, if the mitigation occurs at the impacted site (i.e. "on site"), and, second, if the mitigation wetland recreates the same type of wetland as the impacted wetland (i.e. "in-kind"). As a result, on site and in-kind mitigation is generally preferred by the Water Board; however, off-site and out-of-kind mitigation may be allowed in some instances, especially where approved watershed plans are followed.

Each agency should be consulted directly to determine mitigation requirements. For more information, refer to the *Fact Sheet for Wetland Projects* found at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/certs.shtml>.

Item-by-item Form Instructions (for selected line items that may need further explanation):

Block 1 (Completed by): The applicant is the legally responsible party or entity applying for the permit, or his representatives/agents (such as consultants).

Block 2 (Date of submission): The date this Form will be submitted. It should be within 14 days from the date of the Water Quality Certification or adoption of the Board Order unless specified otherwise.

Blocks 3 to 18 (Agency ID numbers and dates): Please include all numbers and dates available on the date of submission. The purpose of this form is to track the Water Board's wetland mitigation requirements, but we are interested in coordinating with other agencies. If a listed agency is not part of the permitting process, enter "N/A" for "not applicable"; otherwise, if the information is not yet available, enter "pending."

Key to agency abbreviations

BCDC: Bay Conservation and Development Commission
CA DF&G: California Department of Fish and Game
Corps: US Army Corps Of Engineers
NMFS: National Marine Fisheries Service
SCC: State Coastal Conservancy
USFWS: US Fish and Wildlife Service
Water Board: Regional Water Quality Control Board

General Information

This section is for information on the project overall. Information specific to the restoration/mitigation site(s) and any development/impacting site(s) is entered in subsequent form sections. **Note:** The term "restoration project" is used generically here; a restoration project can contain a mix of restoration, creation, enhancement and preservation (see Form for definitions).

Block 19 (Project name): Provide a name for the project consistent with other agency applications. If necessary, create a name now. If there are alternate names or nicknames that are associated with the project, please include them (separate with semicolons).

Block 20 (Project description): Provide 20-150 words on what will be done and why.

Block 21 (Project type): "Mitigation" refers to legally required compensatory wetland mitigation for unavoidable adverse impacts to wetlands. "Non-mitigation" refers to voluntary projects intended to increase wetland or riparian acreage or functions.

Applicant Information

Blocks 22 to 25: Provide the name, full mailing address, email, and daytime phone number(s) of the legal Applicant or “contact.” The Applicant is the entity or individual to whom the permit will be issued. *If the Applicant is an agency, company, corporation or other organization, indicate the responsible officer and title.*

Contact for Technical Information

Blocks 26 to 30: The Applicant and the contact for technical information on the project may be the same. If they are not, provide the name, address, email, and phone number(s) of any agent authorized to act on behalf of the Applicant in regards to inquiry on technical details. If an agent is identified, the Applicant must sign a statement, which is provided on the regular 401 application form, authorizing the agent to act on behalf of the Applicant.

Funders/contributors

Block 31: Check and/or list all organizations, other than the Applicant, that have made *or plan to make* a financial or in-kind contribution to the project.

Restoration/Mitigation Site Information

Blocks 32 (Restoration/mitigation site name): If the restoration/mitigation site has a name that is different than the overall project, enter it here.

Blocks 33 and 34 (Restoration/mitigation site location): Provide the county or counties that contain the restoration or mitigation project, and the latitude and longitude of the approximate center of the project in decimal degrees (Use the NAD83 datum if possible; otherwise, any datum is acceptable; indicate the datum if known).

Block 35 (Mitigation is): Check all that apply.

Block 36 (Groundwork and monitoring dates): List expected dates for groundwork and monitoring. Agencies including the Water Board should be notified if the actual start dates are delayed more than 3 months after the estimated dates.

Block 37 and 38 (Delineation/ Assessment): Most projects should provide a wetland delineation and either a rapid conditional assessment or a more detailed functional assessment on the restoration/mitigation area after project construction. Rapid conditional assessments include methods such as CRAM (the California Rapid Assessment Method; see www.cramwetlands.org), WEA (Wetland Ecological

Assessment), or other method; functional assessments measure specific processes and are more detailed and time consuming than conditional assessments.

Block 39 (Water sources): Check all water sources anticipated to sustain the wetland project.

Development /Impacted Site Information (if applicable)

This section should be completed by referring only to the development project or impacted site of a mitigation project.

Block 40 (Development Project/Impacted site name): If the development project or impacted site has a name that is different than the overall project, enter it here. If there are alternate names or nicknames that are associated with the project, please include them (separate with semicolons).

Blocks 41 and 42 (Development/impact site location): Provide the county or counties that contain the development project/impacted site, and the latitude and longitude of the approximate center of the project in decimal degrees (Use the NAD83 datum if possible; otherwise, any datum is acceptable; indicate the datum if known).

Block 44 and 45 (Delineation/ Assessment): Most projects should perform a wetland delineation and either a rapid conditional assessment or a more intensive functional assessment on the development/impact area after project construction. Rapid conditional assessments use methods such as CRAM (see www.cramwetlands.org), WEA, or other method.

Performance Criteria

Block 46 (Project performance criteria): Provide a table, bullet points or narrative identifying project targets that will determine the overall performance or success of the project at the end of the monitoring period (typically 5 or 10 years depending on the project). Performance criteria typically include elements such as vegetation (e.g., percent cover, percent survival, species richness), hydrology (e.g., duration and extent of soil saturation or inundation), wildlife populations, water quality improvement, or soil type. For mitigation plans, the performance criteria should be those found in the Final Mitigation Plan or permit for the site. Attach a separate file if necessary.

Example performance criteria table (the list is not meant to be complete or definitive):

Element	Performance Criteria	Year (or other suitable metric)
Vegetation	25% cover	1
	80% cover	5
	80% survival	10 (for riparian systems)
Hydrology	inundation or saturation	10% of the growing season (for a wetland system)
	water conveyance	annually or less frequently (for a riparian system)
Wildlife	shorebird populations comparable to reference site	1
Etc.	Etc.	Etc.

Block 47 (Vegetation planting list): Provide a list of target vegetation species and include both the wetland indicator and native plant status.

Block 48 (Reference or data sets): List any reference locations or datasets that will be used as targets or guidelines. For example, if an adjacent wetland of the same habitat type will be used to judge the performance of the mitigation wetland, list that site and the monitoring element to which it will be compared (e.g., vegetative percent cover). Or, if Regional Monitoring Program data or Regional Water Board's water quality objectives will be used to judge water, sediment, or biotic monitoring data, list those data sets or targets.

Block 49 (Other project conditions): Optional. List other conditions in the 401 Certification or other permit.

Habitat Maps Requirement

Block 51: Instructions are provided on the Form. The recommended tool for habitat mapping is Google Maps: My Maps. See <http://www.wetlandtracker.org/map-examples>.

Block 52: If using Google Maps: My Maps please submit both KML files and the URL(s) to the habitat maps on maps.google.com.

Existing Habitat Total

Block 53: Provide two figures: 1) the total **acres** of all existing habitats, including riparian habitats (if any); 2) the total **linear feet** of all existing riparian habitats (if

any). These numbers should be consistent with the *present habitats* map described in the previous section.

Planned Habitat Changes

Block 54 (Planned habitat changes): Complete the table by breaking down the project areas by the habitat types (rows) and activity types (columns) provided. The first 8 columns are for habitat gains or improvements, and the last 2 are for habitat losses. Consider all areas in both the mitigation/restoration site and the development project/impacted site. The breakdown of gains should be mutually exclusive (i.e. don't double-count any project areas).

Habitat conversion: Conversions from one wetland/riparian habitat to another should be represented with matching entries in both the Gained section and the Lost section of the table.

Notes:

- Both “created” wetlands (establishment where previously none existed) and “restored” wetlands (establishment where previously some did exist) lead to an increase in wetland area.
- An area is tallied as “enhanced” when wetland function will improve through planned physical modifications, but the wetland type and size remain the same.
- An area is tallied as “preserved” when it *remains physically unchanged*, but its legal status has changed such that it is no longer available for development or other habitat-impacting activity. If an area will be physically modified, it cannot be “preserved.”

Use acres for wetlands; use **both** acres and linear feet for channel and riparian areas. Habitat definitions and project activity definitions are provided immediately below the table.

See additional guidance regarding mitigation projects under “General Form Instructions,” above.

Block 55 (Habitat determination): Check the items that indicate how the habitat types were determined.

Block 56 (Project comments/additional information): Optional.

Blocks 57 to 63 (Project monitoring): Optional. Provide information on project monitoring that will be conducted at the mitigation or restoration site. Frequency information can be completed with a checkmark or “X” in the appropriate column.

Additional Assistance

For additional assistance, please contact SFEI staff or Water Board technical staff listed below for the county in which the project is located (current as of July 1, 2008).

San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI)

Michael May	(510) 746-7370	mikem@sfei.org
Josh Collins	(510) 746-7365	josh@sfei.org

San Francisco Bay Water Board 401 Program*

COUNTY	STAFF	PHONE	EMAIL
Alameda	Brian Wines	(510) 622-568	BWines@waterboards.ca.gov
	Leslie Perry	(510) 622-2312	LPerry@waterboards.ca.gov
Contra Costa	Katie Hart	(510) 622-2356	KHart@waterboards.ca.gov
	Matt Graul	(510) 622-2381	MGraul@waterboards.ca.gov
Marin	Marla Lafer	(510) 622-2348	MLafer@waterboards.ca.gov
Napa	Fred Hetzel	(510) 622-2357	FHetzel@waterboards.ca.gov
San Francisco: 401 Certs:	Marla Lafer	(510) 622- 2348	MLafer@waterboards.ca.gov
Phase II Stormwater:	Fred Hetzel	(510) 622-2357	FHetzel@waterboards.ca.gov
San Mateo	Matt Graul	(510) 622-2381	MGraul@waterboards.ca.gov
Santa Clara	Brian Wines	(510) 622-5680	BWines@waterboards.ca.gov
Solano	Jolanta Uchman	(510) 622-2432	JUchman@waterboards.ca.gov
Sonoma	Abigail Smith	(510) 622-2413	ASmith@waterboards.ca.gov
401 Program Manager	Elizabeth Morrison	(510) 622-2330	EMorrison@waterboards.ca.gov
	Shin-Roei Lee	(510) 622-2376	SRLee@waterboards.ca.gov
Region-wide Wetland Permits	Andree Greenberg	(510) 622-2324	AGeenberg@waterboards.ca.gov
	Elizabeth Morrison	(510) 622-2330	EMorrison@waterboards.ca.gov
Wetland Tracker and Monitoring:	Andree Greenberg	(510) 622-2324	AGeenberg@waterboards.ca.gov
Watershed Section Leaders			
Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Mateo counties	Dale Bowyer	(510) 622-2323	DBowyer@waterboards.ca.gov
Marin, Napa, Solano, Sonoma, San Francisco counties	Bill Hurley	(510) 622-2364	WHurley@waterboards.ca.gov
Industrial and Construction Stormwater Permits and WDRs	Christine Boschen	(510) 622-2346	CBoschen@waterboards.ca.gov
Other Agency Affiliations			
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission	Xavier Fernandez	(510) 622-5685	XaFernandez@waterboards.ca.gov
CALTRANS	Brendan Thompson	(510) 622-2422	BThompson@waterboards.ca.gov
Santa Clara Valley Water District	Margarete Beth	(510) 622-2338	mabeth@waterboards.ca.gov

*As of Nov. 1, 2008. For updated contacts see <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/certs.shtml> or call 510-622-2300.